Items	% Growth
Gems & Jewellery	35.92
Chemicals & related products	13.79
Engineering goods	18.79
Textiles	7.10
Agri. & allied products	7.22

(c) The major sectors which have laggedbehindduring April-July. 2002-03 are plantations, marine products, leather and leather manufactures, electronic goods and petroleum products.

(d) The export growth rate of 13.5% in the first halfofthe year is above the target of 12%. Steps are being taken to further boost exports. The EXIM Policy for 2002-07 incorporates a number of measures to proactively promote exports. Some of the major initiatives undertaken by the Government to boost exports of merchandise goods include launching the scheme of Assistance to States for Infrastructure Development for Exports, strengthening of Market Access Initiative, establishing Agri Export Zones, incorporating additional features and facilities for Special Economic Zones, launching of "Focus Africa" Programme, etc. Besides these, a Medium Term Export Strategy 2002-07 which was announced this year, has identified 220 Focus Products and 25 Focus Markets to achieve \% share in world exports by 2006-07.

Herbs pending for patents

1214. SHRI R. K.AMARAJ: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUS TRY be pleased to state:

(a) the list of herbal patents obtained, so far; and

(b) the list of herbs which are pending for obtaining patents, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY {DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) and (b) Herbs or *herba\s, perse.* are not patentable under the provisions of the Patents Act, ! 970 and will not be patentable even under the patent law recently amended.

Import of garilic by Karnataka

1215. SHRI K.B.KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Karnataka has imported garlic from China; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRYOF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDJ): (a) and (b) Under the current Exim Policy, import of fresh garlic is restricted and can be imported only against a specific import licence. No licence/permission has been given to the Government of Karnataka for import of Fresh Garlic during the current licensing year as they have not applied for any such license.

Increase in the price of paper by major companies

1216. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the major paper producing companies *viz.,* JK and Ballarpur have increased the price of paper three-four times this year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the impact of increase in the price of paper of the text books of schools and colleges; and

(d) the steps being taken to reduce the price of paper?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) to (d) Paper Industry is a delicensed one. There is no statutory control over prices of paper which are driven by the market forces. J.K. Paper Limited and Ballarpur Industries Limited have informed that they increased the price of paper manufactured by them to certain extent during this year. Information regarding price of text book of schools and colleges is not centrally maintained in this Department.

Applications pending with DGFT

1217. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUS TRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications pending with DGFT for fixation of input/ output norms and DEPB rates;

(b) whether it is a fact that it takes more than 3/6 months before an application is cleared;

(c) the reasons for the inordinate delay in this regard; and

(d) the steps being taken to clear applications expeditiously to help exporters?